



AN ACT CLARIFYING AND RECODIFYING THE MANDATORY LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR EMPLOYEES HOLDING PUBLIC OFFICE; AMENDING SECTION 2-18-601, MCA; REPEALING SECTION 2-18-620, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Mandatory leave of absence for employees holding public office. (1) Employers of employees elected or appointed to a public office in the city, county, or state shall grant the employees leaves of absence, not to exceed 180 days per year, while they are performing public service. Employees of an employer who employs 10 or more persons must, upon complying with the requirements of subsection (2), be restored to their positions, with the same seniority, status, compensation, hours, locality, and benefits as existed immediately prior to their leaves of absence for public service under this section.

(2) An employee granted a leave of absence shall make arrangements to return to work within 10 days following the completion of the service for which the leave was granted unless the employee is unable to do so because of illness or disabling injury certified to by a licensed physician.

(3) Unemployment benefits paid to a person by application of this section may not be charged against an employer under the unemployment insurance law.

Section 2. Section 2-18-601, MCA, is amended to read:

"2-18-601. Definitions. For the purpose of this part, ~~except 2-18-620~~, the following definitions apply:

(1) (a) "Agency" means any legally constituted department, board, or commission of state, county, or city government or any political subdivision of the state.

(b) The term does not mean the state compensation insurance fund.

(2) "Break in service" means a period of time in excess of 5 working days when the person is not employed and that severs continuous employment.

(3) "Common association" means an association of employees established pursuant to 2-18-1310 for

the purposes of employer and employee participation in the plan.

(4) "Continuous employment" means working within the same jurisdiction without a break in service of more than 5 working days or without a continuous absence without pay of more than 15 working days.

(5) "Contracting employer" means an employer who, pursuant to 2-18-1310, has contracted with the department of administration to participate in the plan.

(6) "Employee" means any person employed by an agency except elected state, county, and city officials, schoolteachers, persons contracted as independent contractors or hired under personal services contracts, and student interns.

(7) "Full-time employee" means an employee who normally works 40 hours a week.

(8) "Holiday" means a scheduled day off with pay to observe a legal holiday, as specified in 1-1-216 or 20-1-305, except Sundays.

(9) "Member" means an employee who belongs to a voluntary employees' beneficiary association established under 2-18-1310.

(10) "Part-time employee" means an employee who normally works less than 40 hours a week.

(11) "Permanent employee" means a permanent employee as defined in 2-18-101.

(12) "Plan" means the employee welfare benefit plan established under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(9) pursuant to 2-18-1304.

(13) "Seasonal employee" means a seasonal employee as defined in 2-18-101.

(14) "Short-term worker" means:

(a) for the executive and judicial branches, a short-term worker as defined in 2-18-101; or

(b) for the legislative branch, an individual who:

(i) is hired by a legislative agency for an hourly wage established by the agency;

(ii) may not work for the agency for more than 6 months in a continuous 12-month period;

(iii) is not eligible for permanent status;

(iv) may not be hired into another position by the agency without a competitive selection process; and

(v) is not eligible to earn the leave and holiday benefits provided in this part or the group insurance benefits provided in part 7.

(15) "Sick leave" means a leave of absence with pay for:

(a) a sickness suffered by an employee or a member of the employee's immediate family; or

- (b) the time that an employee is unable to perform job duties because of:
 - (i) a physical or mental illness, injury, or disability;
 - (ii) maternity or pregnancy-related disability or treatment, including prenatal care, birth, or medical care for the employee or the employee's child;
 - (iii) parental leave for a permanent employee as provided in 2-18-606;
 - (iv) quarantine resulting from exposure to a contagious disease;
 - (v) examination or treatment by a licensed health care provider;
 - (vi) short-term attendance, in an agency's discretion, to care for a relative or household member not covered by subsection (15)(a) until other care can reasonably be obtained;
 - (vii) necessary care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition, as defined in the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993; or
 - (viii) death or funeral attendance of an immediate family member or, at an agency's discretion, another person.
- (16) "Student intern" means a student intern as defined in 2-18-101.
- (17) "Temporary employee" means a temporary employee as defined in 2-18-101.
- (18) "Transfer" means a change of employment from one agency to another agency in the same jurisdiction without a break in service.
- (19) "Vacation leave" means a leave of absence with pay for the purpose of rest, relaxation, or personal business at the request of the employee and with the concurrence of the employer."

Section 3. Repealer. Section 2-18-620, MCA, is repealed.

Section 4. Codification instruction. [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an integral part of Title 39, chapter 2, part 1, and the provisions of Title 39, chapter 2, part 1, apply to [section 1].

Section 5. Saving clause. [This act] does not affect rights and duties that matured, penalties that were incurred, or proceedings that were begun before [the effective date of this act].

Section 6. Effective date. [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
HB 0144, originated in the House.

Chief Clerk of the House

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2009.

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2009.

HOUSE BILL NO. 144
INTRODUCED BY D. MCALPIN
BY REQUEST OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

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